

has discovered that, government-wide, Federal agencies have had help developing requests for proposals (RFPs) for any number of goods and services from industry insiders, all in the interest of expediency.

While it is certainly reasonable for the government to consult with industry insiders during RFP development, it is deplorable for these industry insiders to make recommendations to the government that would result in only one selectable proposal: that from the company of the insider who assisted with the initial RFP.

Such action is wrong, yet it has happened on numerous occasions.

For example, starting in late 2003, DHS issued an RFP for "eMerge2," an effort to finish the consolidation of all of the financial systems of the DHS components into one new system. The eMerge2 RFP was drafted in large part by a single contractor. When the contract was awarded, it was split between two contractors, one of them being the company that helped write the RFP. Long story short: eMerge2 was a failure.

The questions raised by eMerge2 run deeper than "just" the federal dollars that were doled out without seeing any return. Indeed, the eMerge2 fiasco raised serious questions about whether more needs to be done, both by DHS and by contractors, to ensure that the "firewalls" contractors are using are actually working. This legislation answers some of those questions.

Similarly, when the Coast Guard (USCG) realized that the majority of its marine and aviation fleet was in desperate need of upgrade, it relied upon only two contractors to design the entire Deepwater project, without nearly enough consultation from USCG personnel. Now the Coast Guard has had to pull ships from service and is borrowing boats from the Navy. Our waters are less secure now than before 9/11 because of the fiasco that is Deepwater.

Surely, there have been examples of unnecessary government largesse resulting in waste. That said, while private industry as a contracting partner can save taxpayer dollars, I am skeptical that a business that helped to write an RFP and was the only business qualified to receive it really has the taxpayers' best interests in mind. In fact, this type of malfeasance is criminal, in my opinion.

This legislation seeks to eliminate the potential for future abuses of Federal homeland security procurement dollars. It would require that any contract entered into after May 1, 2007 is not awarded to companies who played a role in constructing the RFP for said contract. If the company is awarded the contract, the Secretary of Homeland Security must certify to Congress that the contract was issued through a competitive process and that DHS took all appropriate measures to ensure that during the RFP design stage, any potential contractor could not influence the RFP to favor itself. Additionally, it would allow for contractors who had input in the process to be hired as subcontractors if they had input designing the RFP but were not ultimately selected as the lead contractor.

I would encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this necessary legislation, which has the potential to save the Federal Government hundreds of millions of dollars, if not more annually. The financial resources of the Federal Government are limited. It should not

be as easy as it currently is to game the system and bilk tens of millions of dollars at a time out the Department of Homeland Security's budget.

A TRIBUTE TO MR. JOHN S.
NIGRELLI, SR.

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of Mr. John S. Nigrelli, Sr., Chairman of the United Savings Bank. Mr. Nigrelli has been chosen as the recipient of the 2007 Achievement Award sponsored by the Association Regionale Calabrese of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Nigrelli's lifetime of excellence and achievement began at the Lawrence Savings and Loan Association. During his time there, he began night school to further his education and completed an Associate degree in business administration from the Wharton School of The University of Pennsylvania.

While attending night school, Mr. Nigrelli dedicated himself to Albert Lawrence Savings and Loan in an effort to continue his advancement through the bank. These tremendous efforts, both educational and professional, were recognized. In 1963, Mr. Nigrelli was elected as an officer of the bank. Throughout his career, he continued to conquer his professional goals and continued his quest for education and knowledge. In 1970, he was elected Executive Vice President and in 1977, he was named President and C.E.O. He continued to hold that position until 2006 when he was named Chairman and C.E.O. As Albert Lawrence Savings and Loan transformed into United Savings Bank throughout the years, Mr. Nigrelli's experience has always guided the bank to unparalleled success.

The bank flourished under Mr. Nigrelli's leadership, knowledge, and experience. His efforts were recognized not only by the community of Philadelphia but by several publications, as one of the most established and stable banks in the city.

Even today, Mr. Nigrelli's kindness is felt through the organizations and charities in which he is a part. Throughout his professional success, this great man was supported by his wife, Marie Pedano. Although she passed away in August 10, 2002, her inspiration continues to contribute to Mr. Nigrelli's continued success. John's endeavors have also been supported by his four beloved children and seven grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you and my distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating Mr. John Nigrelli, Sr. on his 2007 Achievement Award sponsored by the Association Regionale Calabrese. This great honor could not go to a better man.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, March 20, 2007, I was traveling with the

President of the United States to attend a meeting back in the district and thus missed rollcall votes #160 through 163. Had I been present, I would have voted "Yea" on rollcall votes 161 and 162 and "Nay" on rollcall votes 160 and 163.

RECOGNIZING THE 42ND ANNIVERSARY OF MAUI ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, INC.

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Ms. HIRONO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 42nd Anniversary of Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc. (MEO), which was chartered as a community action agency on March 22, 1965, by Federal mandate under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

The motto of MEO is "Helping People. Changing Lives." And for these past 42 years, MEO has maintained a successful record of service by providing basic tools for living, for earning, for self-reliance, and for community involvement.

MEO has initiated many important programs on the Valley Isle, which include specialized bus transportation for seniors, persons with disabilities, and youth; Head Start; Enlace Hispano; community reintegration of prison former inmates; micro-enterprise loans; business education for low income entrepreneurs; employment training and placement programs; Low Income Home Energy Assistance; and energy conservation and home energy assistance for low-income persons. Most impressively, MEO is able to serve all three islands that comprise the County of Maui: Maui, Lanai, and Molokai.

MEO is one of only a handful of agencies—out of over 1,000 community action agencies nationwide—selected by the National Community Action Partnership to receive an Agency of Excellence Award, highlighting superior administrative operations and program excellence. This translates into advocacy and outstanding services tailored to the needs of the Maui community.

I would like to extend a sincere mahalo nui loa (thank you very much) to the staff of MEO for their hard work and dedication. May the next four decades prove to be as successful.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CHRISTOPHER JAMES CEPEDA FERNANDEZ

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I rise with heavy heart to mourn with my constituency the loss of Guam, Army National Guardsman Specialist Christopher James Cepeda Fernandez.

On March 5, 2007, Specialist Fernandez, a 28-year-old father of one, was killed while serving on deployment in support of the Combined Joint Task Force in the Horn of Africa. Due to Christopher's patriotism and sacrifice to our country, he was posthumously promoted to Sergeant.